

Application No. 09/920,435  
Filed: August 1, 2001  
Group Art Unit: 1639

22, drawn to a method of screening a natural sample using a non-competitive assay, classified variously, for example, class 436, subclass 541.

However, Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement to the claims and assert that the claims encompass one group without burdening the Examiner with completely different searches. The inventive technical features comprised in Group I and II claims are not separate and distinct. Claims represented in Group II are directed to using a competitive assay by adding a known binding ligand to the same steps recited in the method claims in Group I. The addition of a competitive ligand is another way for determining the specificity of an unknown hit. These two methods are not mutually exclusive. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the restriction be removed and consider together all pending claims 1-22.

But, if the restriction is maintained, the following is a response to the election of species. The Examiner further required, for searching purposes, a specific election of species from three different subgroups identified on page 4, paragraph 7, of the Office Action. A. An exemplary species of a first size-exclusion medium is a gel-filtration medium, such as Sephadex G-25 having a molecular weight limit of about 7kD. B. An exemplary species of a second size-exclusion medium is an

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ultracentrifugation membrane having a molecular weight limit of about 3kD. C. An exemplary species of analysis from those set forth in claim 22 is high performance liquid chromatography coupled on-line with mass spectrometry.

The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any matter that would expedite allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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